

## Five Legal Trends Affecting Churches and Ministries

### Prevention Is Key in Risk Management

When it comes to managing risks in any church or ministry setting, a key factor is preventing injuries and property damages from occurring in the first place. That's easy to say, but ultimately more difficult to accomplish. Injuries and damages leading to litigation can happen in virtually any ministry setting, despite the ministry's best efforts to limit risk factors with solid policies designed to safeguard ministry participants.

Managing risk is even more difficult when church or ministry leaders have not identified or are unaware of the potential risks that can confront their organization, staff, and participants. Sometimes, even the most common risks can pose great danger to the well-being of a church or ministry.

The five legal trends discussed in this article shed light on risks that churches and ministries have faced in recent years. With an understanding of these trends, ministry leaders can more easily identify and implement ways to prevent potential liability in their ministry settings and better protect the safety and security of their organizations and ministry participants.

### TREND 1

#### Ministry Activities and Facility Use: Release of Liability

Exercise groups, election boards, social service groups, and other worthwhile organizations may ask to use your church or ministry facilities for meetings or other events. Before agreeing to loan your facility to anyone, first consider how to protect your organization from liability for damages or injuries resulting from activities your ministry does not sponsor.

#### Facility Use Agreements

Limit liability risks by requiring all groups borrowing or renting your facilities to sign a *Facilities Use Agreement*. Ideally, such agreements contain language requiring the borrowing group to:

- Obtain liability insurance with coverage limits that equal or exceed your policy's limits.
- Name your church or ministry as an additional insured for any liability damages resulting from the group's activities.
- Indemnify, defend, and hold your organization harmless for any liability claim resulting from the group's activities.
- Provide a certificate of insurance showing your church or ministry as an additional insured.

You also can limit liability by keeping your facilities in tiptop operating condition. If someone falls down stairs because your handrail is loose, the blame is likely to fall squarely on you.

Before allowing a new group to use your building, provide safety and emergency information—church/ministry name and street address, building map with exit routes marked, rules for guests to follow, and other details that a person would reasonably need to know.

#### Activity Participation Agreements

Ministry activities, whether they engage young people or adults, frequently involve an element of risk that can't be completely eliminated or ignored.

In many cases—youth events, adult and youth mission trips, camping events, and ministry-sponsored sports and recreational programs—an *Activity Participation Agreement* can help protect churches and ministries from liability inherent in the activity. Such an agreement acknowledges the risks associated with the activity and holds your organization harmless from injury or losses that those involved in the activity sustain. A good *Activity Participation Agreement* is specific to the ministry and addresses the unique risks and relationships that the ministry may face.

Too often, churches and ministries unwisely have people sign one agreement covering all activities for an entire year. Generally, participants should sign separate

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participation agreements for each ministry activity. Ministry leaders might consider one participation agreement only for recurring activities that have less likelihood for injury.

While adults can commit themselves to the terms of an *Activity Participation Agreement*, minors can't enter into any type of contract, including a liability waiver or release form. A well-worded participation agreement won't waive a minor's rights. Instead, it establishes a contractual exchange, and waives or releases the parent's/guardian's own claims resulting from injury to their minor child or ward. By entering into such an agreement, a parent or guardian also agrees to indemnify the ministry in the event their child makes a claim against the organization. With the help of a local attorney, these agreements can be modified to fit the ministry's specific needs.

## TREND 2

### Discipline and Belief-Based Decisions

While Scripture cautions Christians about suing other Christians, the number of lawsuits involving issues of church or ministry discipline and employment practices has risen in recent years. Even so, the courts have been reluctant to venture far into these areas, except under specific, well-defined circumstances. The U.S. Constitution provides churches and ministries certain protections for decisions that ministry leaders make, based on their religious beliefs.

#### Church and Ministry Discipline

Some civil courts have intervened in church disciplinary affairs under these circumstances:

- Disciplinary actions constitute a deliberate, malicious attempt to financially, relationally, or psychologically ruin someone.
- Church or ministry discipline publicly divulges details of an individual's personal, private affairs when that person is no longer affiliated with the church in any way.
- A church or ministry fails to consistently apply its own established disciplinary guidelines.

To reduce the likelihood of a civil court intervening in the affairs of your organization, consider amending its disciplinary guidelines to limit their application. State clearly to whom the disciplinary authority applies.

Secure written confirmation that members, regular attendees, and ministry participants understand and agree

with the discipline policies. Discipline should never apply to anyone who is not clearly and voluntarily affiliated with your church or ministry.

#### Belief-Based Employment Decisions

Employees in virtually any organization can sue their employer because of employment-related decisions. The likelihood that a court will uphold a ministry employee's claim against a church or ministry depends largely on two factors:

- What type of employee is making the claim?
- What has the ministry done to clearly spell out its expectation of employees? (Applies to larger employers.)

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides equal employment opportunities for individuals, regardless of the person's race, color, religion, gender, or national origin. It also includes certain exemptions that help protect ministry leaders when they make employment decisions based on the ministry's religious beliefs.

The landmark 2012 Supreme Court ruling, *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Church and School v. EEOC*, formally recognized a ministerial exception that effectively bars ministerial staff from suing their employer in response to employment-related, belief-based decisions that ministry leaders have made. However, the Supreme Court declined to specifically define who should be considered a minister for purposes of the exception. Instead, the justices said a court will look to see:

1. Whether the religious institution made its decision to hire the individual based "largely on religious criteria."
2. Whether the individual is authorized to perform ceremonies of the church.
3. Whether the person engages in ecclesiastical or religious activities and "attends to the religious needs of the faithful" as part of their job function.

From these criteria, senior pastors, associate pastors, and other similar roles appear to fit within the three-factor test. Custodians, secretaries, and others who have jobs that primarily support ministry work (as opposed to performing the ministry work itself) likely won't be considered ministers for purposes of the exception.

Churches and ministries can protect themselves from non-ministerial staff lawsuits by clearly communicating the

ministry's expectations to job applicants and ministry employees in the following ways:

- Include a statement of the ministry's spiritual beliefs in the organization's governing documents or bylaws.
- Tell job applicants and employees what's expected of ministry workers in the employee handbook.
- Apply policies consistently, providing the same discipline for like violations for all employees.
- In governing documents and bylaws, state the ministry's spiritual purpose, reliance on Scripture, and the ministry's intent to operate the organization in accordance with Scripture.
- Include a morals clause in the employee handbook and other documents, telling employees and others that the church expects them to support its spiritual purpose and behave in accordance with it.
- Train clergy, staff, and volunteers to approach individual needs and requests with empathy.
- Consult with local counsel when revising organizational documents and ministry policies and procedures. A wide variety of federal, state, and local laws apply to employer/employee relations.

### **Non-Employment Belief-Based Decisions**

Individuals other than employees—church members, ministry volunteers, church visitors, and the general public—also might take legal action against a church or ministry for belief-based decisions that ministry leaders make. These individuals may pursue a non-employment claim against a ministry if they feel that the organization has harmed them because of action leaders have taken that don't line up with their beliefs or practices. The following list is not comprehensive, but it includes general issues common to a number of churches:

- Acceptance and expulsion of members
- Roles of men and women in governance
- Participation in ministry programs and activities
- Burial rights (if a church owns a cemetery)
- Facility use (who is permitted to use church and ministry facilities and for what purpose)
- Doctrinal issues

Because of the First Amendment free exercise protections that churches and ministries enjoy, courts are generally hesitant to interfere in the belief-based actions of religious institutions. However, they have and will become involved if the matter falls outside of a legal exemption or does not

involve the stated religious beliefs of the church or ministry; for example:

- The door to a lawsuit may open if a practice or belief falls into a "gray area" with the broader church or ministry community and the organization hasn't clearly stated its beliefs on this point.
- If the ministry treats one group of individuals that violate its beliefs differently from another group that violates the same beliefs, a court is more likely to uphold a claim against the ministry.
- If the church or ministry is operating any fee-based enterprise that is not religious in nature and marketed to the general public, the courts are likely to deny religious exemptions with respect to such an enterprise. For example, if the church rents out its conference center or provides "secular" services such as adoption placement to the general public for a fee, the courts could very likely agree with the plaintiff, even if church leadership made a belief-based decision that in some way harms a third party. A church or ministry that offers religious education or instruction in exchange for tuition or a fee will still generally qualify for the exemption.

The exemptions that permit churches and ministries to make decisions based on their religious beliefs can be undermined if the organization fails to convey what those beliefs are, or if they stray too far afield from what most people consider to be the role or mission of a purely religious institution. For this reason, it's important for churches and ministries to clearly state their religious function and beliefs to all those who may be affected by them.

## **TREND 3**

### **Leadership: Boards, Bylaws and Leadership Liability**

Scripture says leaders will be held to a higher standard than the usual believer. While the scriptural reference applies specifically to spiritual leadership, the reference can pertain to church or ministry business and legal matters, as well. Church and ministry leaders, particularly board members, have been placed in a special position of trust, and have a legal duty to place the organization's interests ahead of their own.

#### **Board Fiduciary Responsibility**

Sometimes known as fiduciary responsibility, the duty of board members to act in the best interest of the organization applies whether the church or ministry is

incorporated or not. Business laws offer more protection to board members of incorporated ministries than unincorporated ones. Incorporation helps reduce the likelihood that board members will be held personally liable for decisions they make while serving on the board.

To obtain corporate legal protection, board members must follow two primary requirements:

- **The Prudent Person Rule** can protect board members from personal responsibility unless a “reasonably prudent person” would have avoided similar actions or decisions.
- **The Duty of Loyalty** can protect board members against personal liability as long as their actions and decisions aren’t intended to provide them with personal gain.

### **Bylaws and Leadership Liability**

Board members should be aware of a variety of ministry-related issues and be prepared to answer the following questions:

- **Do we follow our bylaws?** Due to the unique legal protections provided to religious organizations by the U.S. Constitution, bylaws are your ministry’s opportunity to write your own story on how your ministry will look and act. Follow your bylaws consistently. In a dispute, the courts will likely look to the bylaws to determine if it will side with the ministry or the plaintiff.
- **Are we putting the ministry’s interests first?** If leaders receive personal financial benefits as a result of serving on the board, they could potentially be sued for breaching their fiduciary responsibility to the ministry.
- **Do charitable immunity laws protect us from lawsuits?** Charitable immunity laws are typically intended to protect only volunteer workers from lawsuits. They do not protect the ministry organization itself from litigation. Some state laws further limit this protection to volunteer members of a governing board of the charitable institution. However, such laws do not offer the broad immunity from litigation that many may think.
- **How could indemnification provisions in the bylaws help us?** It’s important that ministry leaders review the organization’s existing bylaws and think through the indemnification process before a lawsuit is filed against the organization’s leaders, employees, or volunteers. If an individual is sued in connection with his or her

ministry work, the bylaws should give the governing board the right to decide when and if such an individual will be indemnified (covered) for out-of-pocket costs associated with the lawsuit, thus protecting the ministry from being required to cover costs associated with wrongful or criminal acts.

- **Are we regularly reviewing and amending our bylaws?** Be sure to review your organization’s bylaws at least once every three years or so to ensure that they still accurately reflect the ministry’s structure, beliefs, and practices. It’s important that your bylaws line up with how you actually run your ministry. If they don’t, be sure to work with a local attorney to amend your bylaws.
- **Are we covered by the organization’s insurance policy?** Make sure your church’s or ministry’s insurance policy provides coverage for your leaders individually if someone sues the organization and names them as defendants.

## **TREND 4**

### **Volunteers: Worker Screening/Handling Convicts**

Conducting thorough background checks on potential employees and volunteers is an important part of protecting your ministry’s people and its financial assets. Your screening procedure also should include a criminal background check. At some point, you may learn that a registered sex offender attends your church or participates in your ministry—or wants to. How will you respond?

#### **Worker Screening**

While background screening is a good way to prevent incidents of child sexual abuse, it’s also useful in selecting the right people to assist with ministry finances and other valuable resources. Screen everyone on your ministry team:

- Paid staff and volunteers who have frequent contact with children, the elderly, or people with disabilities.
- Pastors, treasurers, and other people in leadership positions—paid or volunteer.
- Drivers of ministry vehicles.

Some states require background screening for workers involved in certain programs and ministries. Check with a local attorney to learn more about the laws in your state.

Even if state law does not require your ministry to conduct background checks, creating and implementing a program is in your ministry’s best interest. Think about the costs—monetary and emotional—associated with a

ministry employee or volunteer committing a crime or acting inappropriately.

### **Criminal Records**

If individuals pose potential threats to others, their personal history may reveal red flags—and generate other critically important questions:

- What should be considered a red flag: only felonies, recent felonies, felonies involving minors?
- What if the individual is a registered sex offender? Does this history restrict the individual from participating in church or ministry activities, from volunteering in children’s ministry, or from joining in worship completely?

Finding a criminal record on a background check should not necessarily signal the end of the screening process. When a record check comes back with a criminal history, it’s important to examine not only the conviction but also the original charge. There are times when a plea agreement will lower a violent offense to a lesser one.

Consider the time of the conviction—if several years have passed and no incidents have occurred since, potential threats could be decreased as to that individual. All convictions also should not be treated alike. For example, a misdemeanor conviction for disturbing the peace would not create the same risk as a conviction for indecent exposure. It’s unwise, however, to appoint anyone who has engaged in child abuse to any position in the ministry.

A general rule to follow is to check with the local school system to determine if school policy would prohibit an individual with a particular conviction from working within the school system. If the incident you’re considering with a ministry applicant is a prohibiting charge for the school, the individual probably wouldn’t be a good fit for ministry either.

### **Handling Registered Sex Offenders**

Today, it’s becoming more common to have registered sex offenders attending services. A written agreement and policy between the sex offender and the church or ministry can go a long way toward achieving the organization’s goals of serving everyone while keeping all ministry participants safe in the process.

Think about how you will handle this situation before it happens. The term “sex offender” covers a wide range of

individuals, from the teenager convicted of engaging in sexual activity with his underage girlfriend to the pedophile who molested dozens of youngsters. Each presents a different level of risk.

Create a set of procedures that offers accountability for the sex offender and protection for the members of your ministry, especially children and people with disabilities.

- Establish a covenant with the offender. Ask the person to commit to a covenant that includes the following provisions to prevent opportunities for further offense:
  - ✓ State specific types of participation permitted.
  - ✓ Permit ministry leaders to tell others in the congregation about the offender’s conviction, if it’s necessary to do so.
  - ✓ Permit leaders to contact probation officers and others assigned to work with the offender.
  - ✓ State the consequences of violating the covenant.
- Assign one or more accountability partners—designated mentors, sponsors, or chaperones who will be responsible for monitoring the individual’s personal activities while they are on the ministry’s premises or participating in ministry activities.
- Establish regular counseling sessions for the offender with the pastor, a ministry leader, or a counselor who will submit written progress reports to an appointed ministry leader.
- Communicate with others on a need-to-know basis.
- Restrict the offender from many areas of ministry and activities where children are present.
- Collaborate with local agencies and professionals experienced in helping offenders re-enter the community.
- Customize your approach to individual situations.

## **TREND 5**

### **Safety and Security: Mild Disruption to Serious Threat**

Many ministries have experienced awkward moments when a visitor in the back of the room interrupts worship or Bible study with loud proclamations. It can be difficult to determine whether such an interruption is benign or a serious threat.

Protests and even violence have become more common at worship centers during the past several years. Hate groups, social activist organizations, and others spread their messages by staging events that provoke confrontation and attract media attention. Sometimes, it’s a lone individual, intent on committing a violent act, who has created trauma at a church or within a ministry. If



demonstrators or a violent person were to appear on your doorstep, would you know what to do?

### Developing a Safety and Security Plan

A safety and security plan can be useful in responding to all types of emergencies—weather, medical illness or injury, a disruptive or violent individual, or a traumatic incident. If your church or ministry doesn't have a plan that addresses these threats, it's time to begin developing one.

By initiating policies and procedures that provide guidance on how to respond when an event or incident takes place, liability and harm can be minimized. In many ways, creating a safety and security plan is identical to the process of creating a disaster response plan:

- **Assess risks.** Consider possible threats that could emerge in each ministry you operate, then determine the probability of each event happening. Imagine what would happen on weekends when the sanctuary is full or on weekdays when a handful of staff are present. Consider what could happen at the school, preschool, or day care you may operate.
- **Develop a plan.** Enlist a broad cross-section of people, including staff, volunteers, and church or ministry members, who can contribute their expertise to the plan. Including people with experience in law enforcement or public safety also is helpful.
- **Establish protocols.** If you have a plan for dealing with fire or weather emergencies, you can modify that plan to deal with incidents of violence. Consider these factors:
  - ✓ How will you communicate that people need to evacuate because of a threatening intruder?
  - ✓ Who will call police?
  - ✓ How will you deal with possible responses from people concerned about the situation—friends, family members, the community, the media. Do you have a spokesperson?
  - ✓ How will people evacuate the building? Where will they go afterwards? How will you evacuate children?
  - ✓ Who will do what as you respond to the emergency?
  - ✓ How will you treat the injured? Are key volunteers and staff trained in first aid and CPR procedures?
  - ✓ How will you train staff and volunteers to know what to do in an emergency situation? How often will they be retrained? How and when will you carry out training drills?

Other concerns to consider for the safety and security plan include lockdowns, medical emergency response teams, and procedures for responding to domestic violence.

### Developing a Safety and Security Team

The presence of a safety and security team can help your ministry become a harder target and can prevent certain situations from ever happening. A trained team also can be prepared to respond quickly and effectively to a variety of situations—minimizing harm and damage.

For a team to be effective, select members carefully, train them properly, and have policies and procedures in place to protect your ministry both physically and legally. Your safety and security team members also should be ministry-minded, so that your approach to protection complements your efforts for community outreach and ministering to those in need.

Consider these factors when discussing the need for a security team:

- **Team composition**—Will you use volunteers or hire professional security guards? How many members will you need? How will you screen them?
- **Risk to others**—What is the likelihood of your security team members being overpowered by an attacker or shooting someone other than the intended target? How will they be supervised?
- **Use of weapons**—Will team member be permitted to carry weapons—concealed or otherwise? How ministry leaders address the issue of carrying a concealed weapon is a specific element of safety and security programs that are essential to preventing risk. (*See the following section for more thoughts on concealed weapons.*)
- **Training**—How much formal weapons training have security team members received? Are they licensed to carry a weapon in your state? Has their experience included training in resolving conflict with people without using weapons?
- **Vocation**—Are security personnel current or former law enforcement agents? How often do they undergo weapons and conflict-resolution training?

### Carrying Concealed Weapons in Church

Carrying a concealed handgun into church may be a curiosity or commonplace, depending on where you live. State laws vary. Some laws allow churchgoers to carry weapons in places of worship, unless the church prohibits it. Others forbid it, unless the church gives permission.

In the end, church leaders are most often the ones who decide whether or not they will allow anyone to carry concealed weapons on the ministry's property—security team members as well as the public. Because leaders should consider a number of legal, liability, and public-safety questions before establishing a concealed-carry policy for their organization, it's always best to consult with an attorney familiar with local gun laws.

Even if carrying concealed weapons is permitted in your state, church and ministry leaders—like other private property owners—can generally place certain requirements on those who visit their property. If church or ministry leaders do not wish to permit the carrying of concealed weapons on their property, they are almost always free to prohibit it.

Whether leaders decide to allow people to carry concealed weapons or not, the church retains a legal and moral duty to reasonably protect its guests and members. Ministry leaders need enough knowledge and control over the use of weapons in their church to ensure a safe environment for members and guests who participate in worship and ministry activities.

When developing a concealed-carry policy, carefully consider the level of gun control you want your policy to establish for your church:

- **Strict concealed-carry:** Only authorized members of the security team are permitted to carry firearms on church or ministry property. All other firearms must be kept off the property or locked in the trunk of a car.
- **Moderate concealed-carry:** Authorized members of the security team plus other attendees who have a permit to carry and who obtain permission are permitted to carry firearms on church or ministry property. All other firearms must be kept off the property or locked in the trunk of a car.
- **Lack of any concealed-carry:** Any individual is permitted to carry a firearm onto church or ministry property. There are no stated restrictions.

Whatever your decision, coordination within your organization and with authorities who would respond to an incident requires effective communication and management. Staff, security team members, and local authorities need accurate information about what's happening and who is presenting a threat. Your concealed-carry policy will significantly affect your potential liability if shots are fired.

## Resources

### TREND 1

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#### Ministry Activities and Facility Use: Release of Liability

##### Lending Church Facilities: Facility Use Agreements

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/lending-church-facilities-building-use-agreements/>

##### Lending Your Church Facilities: Guidelines and Preparation

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/lending-your-church-facilities-guidelines/>

##### Legal Q&A: How can our ministry protect itself against liability related to youth events or special needs ministry activities?

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/legalassistance/legalqanda/questions/youth-activity-agreement/>

##### Choosing and Using an Activity Participation Agreement?

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/using-an-activity-participation-agreement/>

##### Managing High-Risk Youth Activities

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/managing-highrisk-activities/>

##### Activity Participation Agreement (Sample Form)

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/www/?linkservid=9F950A17-24AF-4A43-9CE531C2C073F0A6&showMeta=2&ext=.pdf>

### Trend 2

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#### Church Discipline and Belief-Based Decisions

##### Avoiding Lawsuits Arising from Church Discipline

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/responding-to-lawsuits-arising-from-church-discipline/>

##### Can an Employee Sue a Church or Ministry for Decisions Based on Religious Beliefs?

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/employment-decisions-based-on-religious-beliefs/>

##### Working Together: A Guide to Employment Practices for Ministries

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/www/?linkservid=D9648676-F080-52EC-16C3DE4DE4A8119A&showMeta=2&ext=.pdf>

##### Avoid Church Employment Liability

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/employment-liability-and-the-church/>

##### Good Employment Practices Protect Ministries

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/employment-practices-for-ministries/>

##### Letting Staff Go – Best Practices for Ministry Employers

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/letting-staff-go/>

##### Sample Policy—Morals Clause

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/www/?linkServID=0507D1C6-0C15-26D5-2CC911652D9BEE1F&showMeta=2&ext=.pdf>

### TREND 3

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#### Church Leadership: Boards, Bylaws and Leadership Liability

##### Ten Things Every Church Board Member Should Know

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/what-church-board-members-should-know/>

##### Legal Q&A: Are board members personally liable for board decisions?

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/legalassistance/legalqanda/questions/are-church-board-members-personally-liable/>

##### Bylaws as They Relate to Incorporating Churches

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/bylaws-and-incorporating-churches/>

##### Gain Knowledge about Church Documents

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/what-you-should-know-about-documents-and-records/>

##### How Much Liability Insurance Do I Need?

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/insurance/understanding-insurance/how-much-insurance/>

##### Policy Documents—Purpose Statements (Biblical Foundation and Creedal Foundation Samples)

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/www/?linkservid=03C43D26-B6D4-73E8-5C011503E5FC4011&showMeta=2&ext=.pdf>



## TREND 4

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### Ministry Volunteers: Worker Screening/Handling Convicts

#### Background Screening: Six Good Reasons to Screen

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/background-screening/background-screening-why-screen/>

#### Common Questions about Background Screening

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/background-screening/common-questions/>

#### Hiring: Considering Background Check Results

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/to-hire-or-not-to-hire/>

#### Legal Q&A: What should our church do when an employee or volunteer background check turns up a criminal record?

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/legalassistance/legalqanda/questions/criminal-records-on-background-checks/>

#### Tough Issues: Registered Sex Offenders in Ministry Activities White Paper

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/www/?linkservid=1F8E6B9A-C950-87D2-1B268B6F9D0FE7E9&showMeta=2&ext=.pdf>

#### Background Screening Checklist

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/www/?linkservid=160B96A2-89DC-431E-8A66F38046C8BDB6&showMeta=2&ext=.pdf>

## TREND 5

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### Safety and Security in the Church: Mild Disruption to Serious Threat

#### Dealing with Disruptive Individuals

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/disruptive-individuals1/>

#### Handling Protests at Church

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/handling-protests-at-church/>

#### Security Resources: From Starting Block to Full Stride

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/church-security/security-resources/tips-and-tools/>

#### Church Security and Armed Security Guards

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/index.cfm/resources/ministry-safety/article/should-churches-have-armed-security-guards/>

#### The Church Safety and Security Guidebook

<http://store.brotherhoodmutual.com/>

#### Responding to Violence in the Church Checklist

<http://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/www/?linkservid=4E8E21A5-9A5A-4687-AE8232D309F09A5D&showMeta=2&ext=.pdf>